

North Treatment Facility Project

Summary of Introductory Open Houses Bothell Mill Creek Shoreline

King County Department of Natural Resources

June 2000



Clean Water – A Sound Investment

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Introduction

In November 1999, King County approved its Regional Wastewater Services Plan. One aspect of this plan includes building a new regional wastewater treatment facility somewhere in north King or south Snohomish County by 2010. King County is just beginning the process to site the new treatment plant, its associated conveyance and marine outfall.

A public involvement program has been developed to educate the public about the current system operated by King County serving King and parts of Snohomish and Pierce counties and to involve them in the selection process for the new north treatment facility, conveyance route for sewage pipes and the outfall site for treated wastewater into Puget Sound.

To ensure a successful siting process, an early series of Open Houses were conducted. This document is a summary of those workshops held at the following locations:

Tuesday, June 13	Wednesday, June 14	Thursday, June 15
Bothell Public Library	Jackson High School	Shoreline Public Library
18215 98 th Ave. NE	1508 136 th St. SE	345 NE 175 th
Bothell	Mill Creek	Shoreline
5-8 p.m.	5-8 p.m.	5-8 p.m.

A total of 33 citizens signed in and participated in these meetings (12 at Bothell, 9 at Mill Creek and 12 at Shoreline).

Open House Goals and Objectives

The purpose of these meetings was to inform citizens of north King and south Snohomish counties about King County's siting process for the new north treatment facilities and to solicit input from citizens regarding the process to site the new north treatment facility, its associated conveyance and marine outfall. The comments received will help shape the policy criteria, which will be transmitted to the King County Council for approval this fall. Ultimately these criteria will be used to evaluate potential sites.

Open House Format

King County advertised the open houses in local newspapers and on local radio stations in order to encourage participation.

All of the open houses were held from 5 – 8 p.m. to accommodate the schedules of most working people. The rooms were set up with a sign-in table at the entrance, four information stations inside the room (all staffed and stocked with comment forms), a video presentation and a sit down/presentation area in the middle of the room. Participants browsed through the information stations from 5 to 7 p.m. A member of the siting team staffed each station. Flip charts were located between the information stations for participants to write down their comments, concerns, or questions.

At 7 p.m., project staff began a 15 – 20 minute formal presentation followed by a facilitated question and answer session.

Information Stations

1 – Sign-in table. Each participant signed in and received a packet of information. Participants were put on our mailing list upon request.

2 – Project overview. Participants were provided information about population growth and diminishing wastewater capacity and learned what the new facilities will cost.

3 – Wastewater overview. This station provided participants with information about the wastewater treatment process and why we treat wastewater.

4 – Site Selection. This station outlined key decision points in the process, identified ways participants can provide input and how the criteria for site selection will be developed. The siting goals were also introduced at this station.

5 – Marine outfall. This station provided information about how the location for the marine outfall will be selected and how that selection process will be coordinated with the siting of the new treatment facility. A video showed recent inspections of the West Point and Renton outfall pipes.

6 – Video. A 12 minute video on wastewater facilities in the northwest titled “Good Neighbors” was shown. Along with the video there were several posters showing examples of well designed wastewater facilities throughout the country.

Presentation

At 7:00 p.m. each evening¹ Christie True and Michael Popiwny, of King County Wastewater Treatment Division, were introduced. Christie began with a presentation that provided an overview of how King County decided to pursue the siting and construction of a new wastewater treatment facility. She described it as the major component of the approved Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP). She also described the other components of the plan. Michael then gave a brief presentation that provided an overview of the siting process, its decision points and timeline. He also displayed examples of other treatment plants, and how they have been designed to “fit into” and benefit the communities in which they operate.

Q & A Session

After the presentation, participants were invited to question Michael, Christie and any other King County staff who were present about the siting process, the siting criteria, or wastewater treatment in general. A staff member or elected official from the host jurisdiction was invited to answer questions from their jurisdiction's perspective. A number of staff and elected officials were present at each meeting. Staff from Norton-Arnold and Janeway facilitated this session, and recorded questions, as well as comments, from participants. All participant questions and

¹ No presentation was given at Mill Creek as all participants had left by 7:00 p.m.

comments are contained in Appendix A of this report. Appendix B contains answers to all questions raised at the meetings.

Summary of Questions and Comments

This report summarizes the questions and comments received on the following themes:

- Impacts
- Factors to consider throughout the siting process
- The marine outfall
- The existing wastewater treatment system

Impacts

Communities

Comments on community impacts were most focused on traffic. Some participants were concerned that specific areas within the siting area would be impacted by traffic during construction of the plant because of narrow roads. Others made more general comments; that spreading the impacts beyond individual communities would be desirable and that the neighborhoods that are likely to be impacted by traffic should be considered when siting the plant. Still others thought that visual amenities, aesthetics and public use of the site after construction, should be considered as ways to minimize and compensate communities for impacts.

The Environment

Participants were concerned about potential impacts related to the siting and operation of new wastewater treatment facilities. Many participants expressed concern for the coastal and aquatic environment. Some individuals felt that coastal zones should be avoided when siting the plant because of specific environmental laws and because of the potential to adversely impact this “limited resource.”

Factors to Consider throughout the Siting Process

When asked what factors King County should consider in the development of policy criteria some participants emphasized the potential impacts discussed above. Others mentioned that King County should look for opportunities to enhance the use of the site beyond wastewater treatment, either by adding amenities with community input, or by developing the site with two/joint purposes. Others thought that the size and geography of the site were important to consider, to buffer the surrounding community from the plant and to use barriers, such as busy roads or hills to mask the site visually and aurally. One participant thought that King County would need to answer the question: Is a wastewater treatment plant the best possible use for the site?

The Marine Outfall

Questions about the marine outfall were focused on the quality of water when it is released into the sound, the role of water depth, distance from the shore, underwater geography, and tidal flows in the decision of where to site the outfall.

The Existing Wastewater Treatment System

Participants asked about current and potential capacity for treatment at both the West Point and South Treatment Plants. In addition, participants asked about plans for expanding capacity at those facilities and about the proposed capacity for the new treatment facility. Other questions and comments were made about the possibility of expanding the siting area to include Everett, and about how communities that want a new wastewater treatment plant will affect the site selection process.

Follow-up

The comments received in these meetings will be used to help shape the policy criteria, which will be used to evaluate potential sites. The comments will be shared with the Siting Advisory Committee who will be reviewing the draft policy criteria. The King County Council will ultimately approve the siting criteria.

All meeting participants who added their name to the mailing list will receive a copy of this report. They will also receive project newsletters and other public notices throughout the process, as well as have the opportunity to participate in future public meetings.

A current list of Siting Advisory Committee members can be found in Appendix C of this report. For more information about the Committee, its role in the siting process and its schedule of meetings, which are open to the public, please contact Debra Ross of the King County Wastewater Treatment Division at (206) 684-1344.

Appendix A – Questions and Comments from the Open Houses

Listed below are the questions asked by the public at the Open Houses held in Bothell (June 13), Mill Creek (June 14), and Shoreline (June 15).

Questions and Comments from the Bothell Public Workshop, Tuesday June 13, 2000

1. Who is on the Siting Advisory Committee?
2. How large a site are you looking for the wastewater treatment plant?
3. How much capacity are you proposing to provide at the new plant?
4. What is the capacity at West Point Treatment Plant?
5. What is the potential for expanding the capacity at West Point?
6. What is the expansion capacity at the Renton Treatment Plant?
7. Will there be expansion at the West Point and Renton Treatment plants?
8. How are Lynnwood, Edmonds, and Woodway served (for wastewater treatment) if they are not in the King County service area?
9. Does the fact that Woodway wants a wastewater treatment plant make your job of selecting a site for the facility easier?
10. Will new treatment technologies be part of the plant design?

Comments

1. The County should consider impacts to the neighborhood – smell and truck traffic – when siting the plant.
2. The County should also consider: disruption from construction, visual amenities/aesthetics, public use of the site, ability to recycle or reuse water.
3. The Lakepointe property in Kenmore is my suggestion for a site for the treatment plant.

Questions and Comments from the Mill Creek Public Workshop, Wednesday June 14, 2000

1. Why not consider Everett to be within the siting area?
2. Why not consider the Lake Sammamish area for the new treatment plant since the map shows that the new plant will serve that area too?

Comments

1. There may be opportunities to solve some of Everett's problems through siting a treatment plant there, and the land is cheaper there as well.
2. An alliance with Everett may make it easier to find a site.

Questions and Comments from the Shoreline Public Workshop, Thursday June 15, 2000

1. Why not expand/upgrade existing plants?
2. Who pays for the new facilities?
3. What is King County's boat studying in Puget Sound?
4. Who has ultimate decision authority for siting the new treatment plant?
5. Why aren't there "average" citizens on the Siting Advisory Committee?
6. How clean is the water when it is released into Puget Sound?
7. How far off shore will the outfall be?

8. What type of seafloor topography is ideal for the outfall?
9. Can the outfall travel across the slope of the seafloor?
10. Does the outfall need to be perpendicular to the current?
11. Can the treated waste[water] be regulated according to tidal flows?
12. What is the [water] depth [off] at Point Wells?
13. How deep does the water need to be where the outfall is located?
14. How does water reuse work?
15. Once mitigation is designed into the plant and is built, whose responsibility will it be to maintain it (park, ballfields, etc.)
16. Why not build a line to feed into Seattle's existing [wastewater] system?
17. What firm assurance do we have that no overflow will go into Lake Washington?

Comments Regarding Factors to Consider in the development of siting criteria

1. Community support
2. Is the treatment plant the best possible use for the site
3. Traffic impacts – sites with multiple access points to minimize impacts are preferred (rail, boat)
4. Avoid coastal areas
5. Design features – use input of neighborhood and community groups
6. Cost (construction, land, piping)
7. Noise (use geographic barriers, e.g. busy road or hill, to minimize)
8. Look for opportunities to serve two/joint purposes – public good
9. Sites with large buffer – undeveloped, not highly residential – are more desirable
10. Minimize negative environmental impacts
11. Look for opportunities to enhance – buy properties and add amenities to mitigate conveyance disturbances

General Comments

1. There should be “average” citizen(s) on Siting Advisory Committee, not just elected officials
2. Concerned about traffic on narrow roads through Richmond Beach
3. If Woodway supports it some traffic should go there
4. Limit traffic burden on individual communities
5. Avoid coastal sites because of Shoreline Act and environmental impact on limited resource

Appendix B – Answers to Questions Asked at the Open Houses

Bothell Public Workshop, Tuesday June 13, 2000

1. Who is on the Siting Advisory Committee?

The Siting Advisory Committee is made up of representatives from local jurisdictions in the siting area, tribal representatives, environmental groups and trade and economic representatives. A full list is located in Appendix C.

2. How large a site are you looking for the wastewater treatment plant?

King County and its consulting team determined that the minimum site size should be 25 acres. However, a larger site would be better to allow for a buffer, such as open space, surrounding the facilities. The facility site would need to be able to accommodate future expansion of the facility, which includes reserved space for water reuse and increased treatment standards, if required.

3. How much capacity are you proposing to provide at the new plant?

The new treatment plant under the King County Council's approved plan would initially provide 36 million gallons per day average wet weather flow. It will be expanded in the future to approximately 54 million gallons per day.

4. What is the capacity at West Point Treatment Plant?

The West Point Treatment Plant treats 133 million gallons per day with a maximum capacity of 440 million gallons per day during high rains.

5. What is the potential for expanding the capacity at West Point?

Under the King County Council's approved plan, West Point will not be expanded. During the planning stages for the Regional Wastewater Services Plan, it was determined that it would be difficult to expand the treatment plant due to limited space, difficulty in getting permits and the West Point Settlement Agreement. There is, however, space to upgrade the facility in the future for water reuse and increased treatment standards, if required.

6. What is the expansion capacity at the Renton Treatment Plant?

The South Treatment Plant in Renton is currently finishing its second phase of expansion to 115 million gallons per day. As scheduled now, South Treatment Plant will be expanded by 20 million gallons per day. King County has decided to reserve additional space at the site for future water reuse needs and increased treatment standards, if required.

7. Will there be expansion at the West Point and Renton Treatment plants?

According to the plan, the South Treatment Plant will be expanded in 2029. In 2018 the West Point Treatment Plant will have additional facilities for Combined Sewer Overflows.

8. How are Lynnwood, Edmonds, and Woodway served (for wastewater treatment) if they are not in the King County service area?

The Cities of Lynnwood, Edmonds and Woodway are serviced by local sewer agencies. Some of these agencies have agreements with King County to provide wastewater treatment

services. The cities of Lynnwood and Edmonds operate their own treatment plants. The Town of Woodway is in the King County Service Area and its sewage is pumped via King County pipes to the Edmonds Treatment Plant.

9. Does the fact that Woodway wants a wastewater treatment plant make your job of selecting a site for the facility easier?

Each potential site for wastewater treatment facilities is going to be judged against the same criteria. Other communities have also expressed interest in sites near their community. Community support could be criteria that the Siting Advisory Committee recommends to the King County Council.

10. Will new treatment technologies be part of the plant design?

King County is evaluating new treatment technologies through its advanced wastewater technologies program that has been in place since the mid 1990s. The final design of the treatment plant will not occur until after the King County Executive selects the preferred system location.

Mill Creek Public Workshop, Wednesday June 14, 2000

1. Why not consider Everett to be within the siting area?

King County is actively seeking partnerships in the region and is interested in meeting multiple wastewater capacity needs. Currently, Snohomish County is evaluating the long-term wastewater needs of the various communities in the County. This could lead to a partnership with Everett.

2. Why not consider the Lake Sammamish area for the new treatment plant since the map shows that the new plant will serve that area too?

The existing system of sewers and pump stations tends to direct the flow in the north service area to the north end of Lake Washington. The north treatment facility will consist of a system of new pipes, new pump stations, a new treatment plant and a Puget Sound outfall. One of the objectives of the siting process will be to minimize the amount of new piping and pumping associated with the facility (to minimize cost and construction impacts). If the plant were sited in the Sammamish area, the majority of the wastewater would need to travel from the north end of Lake Washington in a southeast direction (away from Puget Sound) to be processed and then back in a northwest direction around the north end of Lake Washington to a Puget Sound outfall. The additional large diameter piping necessary to get the wastewater to the treatment facility and then get the treated effluent back to where it was originally diverted at the north end of Lake Washington could easily double or triple the cost of the wastewater conveyance system.

Shoreline Public Workshop, Thursday June 15, 2000

1. Why not expand/upgrade existing plants?

Under the Regional Wastewater Services Plan, the South Treatment Plant will be expanded in 2029 by 20 million gallons per day. West Point will not be expanded. The King County Council decided to build a new treatment plant after extensive analysis and independent review. A third regional plant will give the system the capacity it needs to handle rapid growth and the flexibility to respond to an uncertain future.

2. Who pays for the new facilities?

Under the approved plan, “growth pays for growth,” in other words, new connections to the sewer system will pay for their hook-ups. Capital bonds will be used to spread the costs over many years to keep rates stable and pay for the large facilities. The plan is cost effective since it provides needed capacity while keeping rates low.

3. What is King County’s boat studying in Puget Sound?

King County has been sampling Puget Sound for over 30 years to assess the health of the Sound. As a part of this project we will be having boats in Puget Sound on a weekly basis sampling the currents, water properties, submarine geology and biological resources.

4. Who has ultimate decision authority for siting the new treatment plant?

The King County Executive will approve the final system package, that is the plant site, conveyance and outfall locations.

5. Why aren’t there “average” citizens on the Siting Advisory Committee?

A Siting Advisory Committee has been formed to recommend criteria to the King County Council and to provide project oversight. The King and Snohomish County Executives made the decision to invite regional leaders to serve on the committee based on advice received in a series of interviews with stakeholders from throughout the siting area. As potential sites are identified, individual citizens will have many opportunities to provide comments and help make this decision.

6. How clean is the water when it is released into Puget Sound?

Secondary treated effluent from the two existing regional treatment plants meets and exceeds water quality standards set by state and federal agencies upon entering Puget Sound.

7. How far off shore will the outfall be?

Since the site for the outfall has not been selected, the distance from shore has not been determined. To meet standards, the distance offshore will be probably over 1000 feet.

8. What type of seafloor topography is ideal for the outfall?

Ideally, King County would like to build the outfall on a reasonably flat area. It would be better if the pipes did not have to cross a steep cliff or submarine canyon.

9. Can the outfall travel across the slope of the seafloor?

Outfalls can travel across slopes. However, a steep slope (greater than 30% grade) would not be preferred.

10. Does the outfall need to be perpendicular to the current?

The outfall does not need to be perpendicular to the current however, the operation of the outfall would be affected if the effluent from the pipe had to discharge against the current.

11. Can the treated waste[water] be regulated according to tidal flows?

In many parts of the country outfalls are discharged according to tidal flows. This is especially true in rivers. The difficulty of timing the discharge with the tides is that it requires a very large storage capacity.

12. What is the [water] depth at [off] Point Wells?

The deepest area off Point Wells is approximately 200 meters (656 feet).

13. How deep does the water need to be where the outfall is located?

As King County studies the properties of the water in the siting area, a suitable depth will be determined based on numerous factors. However, based on current data the outfall should be at least 100 feet and probably greater than 200 feet deep.

14. How does water reuse work?

Treated wastewater can be reused in a number of ways including industrial purposes, irrigation, and heating and cooling. For example: At a Boeing facility near the treatment plant in Renton, secondary treated water is run through pipes to cool the facility before being discharged with the effluent from the plant. This saves 200,000 gallons of fresh water a day. For irrigation or other industrial processes, the water is given additional treatment and is safe for human contact. Both treatment plants save fresh water by reusing water inside the plant for cleaning and irrigating.

15. Once mitigation is designed into the plant and is built, whose responsibility will it be to maintain it (park, ballfields, etc.)?

The plant personnel would care for any landscaping around the treatment plant. The maintenance responsibility for any facilities that may be built as mitigation for the treatment plant (such as parks or ballfields, for example) may be included as part of an agreement for the use of the land and will be addressed during the environmental review or permitting process for the project. Habitat restoration projects, once established, would not need maintenance, since they would be allowed to grow naturally.

16. Why not build a line to feed into Seattle's existing [wastewater] system?

Seattle's local sewer system feeds into King County's regional system for treatment at West Point. The regional system requires additional treatment capacity to accommodate the region's growth.

17. What firm assurance do we have that no overflow will go into Lake Washington?

King County cannot assure that no overflows will go into Lake Washington, but we are working to prevent them. One way is adding capacity to the system. There is also a program underway to reduce combined sewer overflows from the older parts of the system.

Appendix C– Siting Advisory Committee Roster

North Treatment Facility Project Siting Advisory Committee Roster *as of June 28, 2000*

Bill Anderson

Commissioner
Silver Lake Water District

Deborah Chase

Councilmember
City of Kenmore

Deanna Dawson

League of Women Voters of Snohomish County

Merle Hayes

Vice Chairman
Suquamish Tribal Council

Dave Hutchinson

Mayor
City of Lake Forest Park

Wayne Kaske

Mayor
City of Brier

Steve Koho

Manager
Edmonds Wastewater Treatment Plant
City of Edmonds

Paul McIntyre

Commissioner
Alderwood Water District

Michael Noblet

Mayor
City of Bothell

Tina Roberts

Mayor
City of Lynnwood

Daryl B. Williams

Environmental Liaison
The Tulalip Tribes

Peter Block

Councilmember
Woodway Town Council

Peter Coates

King County Labor Council

John Glynn

Regional Manager
Water Quality
WA State Department of Ecology

Corinne Hensley

Pilchuck Audubon Society

Scott Jepsen

Mayor
City of Shoreline

Deborah Knutson

Executive Director
Economic Development Council of Snohomish County

Richard Leahy

City Administrator
City of Mukilteo

Mike Miller

Master Builders Association

Tom Putnam

Board Member
Puget Soundkeepers Alliance

Terry Ryan

Mayor
City of Mill Creek

Kinnon Williams

Commissioner
Northshore Utility District